

budget?" Well, we need a balanced budget because, as I said earlier, we have a \$5 trillion national debt, and if we do not zero out that annual deficit in the next 7 years, we will add another \$1 trillion to the national debt. The average child born today, as many have said, already owes \$187,000 in their lifetime to pay the interest on the debt. That lifetime payment does not reduce the national debt!

What does a balanced budget mean for the average citizen?

Let us look at a few items just as a Californian might look at them. The holder of the average California home mortgage, which, believe it or not, is about \$176,000, would save almost \$4,800 per year through lower mortgage interest payments, because a balanced budget by the Federal Government would give confidence to bondholders, to the stock market, and to other financial entities in our country.

How about students? I happen to be a former university president. Student loans are very important to provide educational opportunity for millions of Americans. A California student with an average California loan, which is roughly \$4,300 repayable in 10 years, would save \$858 in interest payments over the life of the loan. That is based on U.S. Department of Education figures.

A balanced budget for the Nation would result in almost 500,000 jobs being provided in California. The cost of borrowing by local governments would be reduced. The 12 largest cities—including my own city of Long Beach—would save \$1.38 billion which could be reinvested in these 12 cities for schools, law enforcement, and public health. In other words, the average citizen would benefit.

Mr. President, get your financial plan—your budget—come to the table, and let us settle this dispute.

EFFECTS OF THE FEDERAL SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the shutdown of the Federal Government is a national disgrace. Yesterday the Senate acknowledged that enough was enough, that the point had been made, that the issue of a 7-year balanced budget was being actively negotiated, and that it was time to stop the widespread suffering caused by the Government shutdown.

But the extremist right wing in the House seems to have so much contempt for the Government and such indifference to the pain the shutdown is causing, that they will not listen to reason. They think nothing of using the Federal Government as a tool of political blackmail or extortion.

Fortunately, President Clinton has protected his priorities and not caved in to these gangster tactics. In the

104th Congress, President Clinton and congressional Democrats have defended ordinary Americans who rely on programs like Medicare, Medicaid, student loans, and student lunches. Republicans have sought to gut these programs which help millions of people. So it should come as no surprise that they seem indifferent to the plight of millions of people, both clients and Government employees, who have suffered from the Government shutdown.

I spoke to several such people Monday at the Federal Government headquarters in New York City. I met one of my constituents, Ms. Edio Rodriguez, there. She is a single mother trying to raise two children on her own. But this furloughed secretary at the Department of Environmental Protection has not been paid in several weeks. In the Rodriguez household, it was anything but a merry Christmas. The only household income is earned by one of her sons, who is also a college student. He may be forced to take next semester off because he cannot pay his student loans and support the family at the same time.

An employee of the Social Security Administration put it beautifully when she said, "I don't know the politics of the situation. They aren't clear. The humanity of the situation, or lack of it, is very clear. Working people should be paid, and people who have 23 years of service should not be told to go home and stay home against their will and without a paycheck."

The indifference of this new majority toward Federal employees is so overwhelming that I may be wasting my breath by talking about the humanity of the situation. But other Americans are being affected, too.

I met my constituent Laurine Fox, a musician who was supposed to be the guest conductor for an orchestra in Bulgaria over the holidays, but Laurine could not get a passport because politicians in Washington are bickering.

I met a woman whose elderly parents immigrated from Europe many years ago and now live in Georgia. They made a pilgrimage to New York to see their names inscribed on the wall at Ellis Island. But Ellis Island was closed, and their sentimental journey was ruined.

It is not just individuals who are being harmed. U.S. manufacturing companies, the city of New York and the U.S. Government stand to lose millions of dollars, because the shutdown is rendering ineffectual the first Hungarian Apparel and Textile Manufacturing Seminar, which is scheduled to take place next Monday in New York. The Hungarians cannot come because they cannot get visas.

Mr. Speaker, this is more than lost business opportunities; it is an international embarrassment.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer ignore the human beings who are suffering from Washington paralysis, like the jeweler who works right across the

street from the Federal Building in New York City. His business over the Christmas season was down more than 60 percent. Yet some Members of the Republican majority have said that no one has noticed the Government shutdown. To those right-wing extremists, all I can say is try telling that to the American people. This shutdown is pure malicious insanity.

Mr. Speaker, the blackmail and extortion will not work. It is time for the new majority to stop acting like gangsters and start acting like statesmen.

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TELLING HORROR STORIES AND BLAMING REPUBLICANS WILL NOT SOLVE BUDGET PROBLEMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, this evening we are hearing a litany of comments about various problems that have arisen with the Government shutdown. I am afraid the other side of the aisle is trying to confuse the issue by citing all these examples.

There is no question about it. The Government shutdown is causing problems, but that is simply confusing the issue, as I said. Talking about ad hominem stories, in other words Government by anecdote, does not really solve the problem. Telling horror stories about some things that are not being done or services that are not being provided does not solve the problem. Just standing there and blaming the Republicans for the problem, does not solve the problem.

I think we have to go back and look at the real issues involved here, and the real issue is the incredible size of the national debt and the size of the budget deficit every year, and the amount of money that we put into paying interest every year.

Mr. Speaker, we have a national debt approaching \$5 trillion. That calculates out to about \$19,000 for every man, woman and child in these United States. And when we consider the number who are working and are able to repay this debt, that balloons to approximately \$30,000 per capita.

We pay interest at the rate of \$1,000 per year on the national debt for every man, woman and child in the United States; \$1,000 per capita. And, once again, if one translates that into the taxpaying citizens, on average each taxpaying citizen is spending well over \$1,500 or \$1,600 just to pay the interest on the national debt each and every year.

The budget deficits continue, which means the debt gets bigger every year and the interest payments get bigger every year. We simply cannot continue. And that is a fact. That is the real issue here. It is not the horror stories about the Government being shut down, the issue is our national debt.

We have proposed, Mr. Speaker, that we achieve a balanced budget in 7 years